NEWS RELEASE

CBS 10 PM-11 PM

SNAILS

Who discovered the specimens: Cecil Dell, 3847 Oak Hill, L. A. 22,
Former Museum employee

Where? In his back yard.

What is the difference between African and European (common garden snail)? African snail has regular markings-brown and white stripes-circular around shell-shape is flatter than common variety-has black rim around aperture. Body of snail is light in color.

European (common) irregular markings-brown in color-globose in shape. Body is dark in color.

African - Helix lactea Muller
European - Helix aspersa Muller

Identified by George P. Kanakoff, Curator of Invertebrate Paleontology.

This snail (African) was found once before in So. California in Elysian Park several years ago. The County Department of Agriculture sent over 100 men into the park to exterminate them. They have not been reported here since.

There is a native California snail which is a Lichen feeder - the mosses which grow around moisture.

The European or common garden snail was introduced to this country in 1862 when a Frenchman wrote to his mother that he missed the snail chowder she had prepared when he was in France. She sent him some of the snails to cultivate. He built a cage of large mesh screen not knowing that when they hatch from the shells they are only 1½ milimeters in diameter and are already equipped with ~~the~~ a tongue for digesting vegetation. They spread out of the cage, throughout the neighborhood, then from county to county and state to state. They cannot be eliminated today because there are too many of them. The danger from them can be estimated by the thousands of dollars spent annually in advertising "Snarol" and other snail poisons.

The African snail is a sturdier specimen. He can seal the aperture to his shell and hibernate for a year in a dry place and come out again when moistened. He feeds solely on cultivated vegetation. Eats three times the amount he can assimilate. Three snails could eat two lettuce leaves or a Petri dish of moistened corn meal overnight.

The discovery of these specimens has been reported to the Co. Dept. of Agriculture.

Any one who sees two kinds of snails in his garden should report it immediately to the L.A.C.M. or the County Department of Agriculture, Pest Control.

(Mr. Dell recently left the Museum, he, while here, happened to mention one day to Kanakoff that there were two kinds of snails in his garden. George asked him to bring in one or two of the unusual kind because there should not be two kinds--when Dell brought the snail in, George identified it as the dangerous African snail.)

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news release

from

LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM
EXPOSITION PARK, LOS ANGELES 7, CALIFORNIA
MORTON H. LEVINE
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE
TELEPHONE RICHMOND 2194

FOR RELEASE IMMEDIATE

COUNTY MUSEUM WARNS AGAINST DANGEROUS AFRICAN SNAILS FOUND HERE

Los Angeles, August 16 -- The voracious African snail, sturdier and many times as destructive as the common garden snail, has been spotted in the Los Angeles area and steps must be taken at once to exterminate him, County Museum scientist George P. Kanakoff warned today.

Kanakoff, Museum curator of invertebrate paleontology, identified specimens brought to him yesterday as African snails. They were discovered by Cecil Dell, 3847 Oak Hill, former museum employe. Kanakoff recalled that African snails were identified several years ago in Elysian Park, at which time the Department of Agriculture of the County sent more than 100 men into the park in a systematic attempt to destroy the snail.

In asking the public to report evidence of the African snail to the Museum or to the County Department of Agriculture, Kanakoff described the creature as easily identified. The African snail has a striped shell, the stripes running along the course of the shell's helical shape. This differs from the darker, overall mottled shell of the common snail. Also, whereas the common snail's body is dark in color, thebody of the African snail is white or milky grey.

Any person finding the African snail in his backyard is asked to call George Kanakoff at the Los Angeles County Museum, RIchmond 2194, or to bring the specimen in for identification.

-0-

Phone calls to be followed up regarding Helix Lastex

Mr. D. Avila, 2800 Sierra, L.A. 31

1260 Court, L.A. 12

540 Casanova St., L.A. 12

1008 Mar View, L.A. 12

1518 No. Boylston, L.A. 12

3009 Baldwin St., L.A. 31

County of Los Angeles
Agricultural Commissioner
507 ALISO STREET
Los Angeles 12, California

HAROLD J. RYAN
COMMISSIONER
KENNETH L. WOLFF
CHIEF DEPUTY

PHONE MUTUAL 9211

August 21, 1951

Dr.Hildegard Howard
County Museum
Los Angeles,California

Dear Dr. Howard:

Following Dr.Kanakoff's phone call to me on August 15th, and as a result of his call, Mr. Emery Myers of this office made an inspection on August 17th of the Cecil Dell property and immediately adjacent territory at 3847 Oakhill Avenue, Los Angeles.

Mr. Myers reports that the property is located in a rolling hill district, sparsely built up with residences. He found 20 specimens of Helix lactea in the vacant lots and hill area. All of these at the time had gone into summer estivation and were under clumps of castor beans or sweet anise plants. In the yards of 9 residences including Mr.Dell's, inspection turned up 3 Helix lactea and 15 Helix aspersa. None of the latter was found in vacant lots or other open ground. No attempt was made to delimit the area of Helix lactea infestation. The specimens taken were over an area of about a 250 ft. radius.

We have no present plans for any attempt at eradication since this new finding is in the same general area as that in which this species was found at other spots as long ago as 1944.

The history of Helix lactea in this county so far as I have it is as I gave it to you over the telephone this morning briefly as follows:

November 1940 Dr.Hill of the Museum informed us of specimens that had been brought to him after being taken in one of the canyons leading south out of Elysian Park, Los Angeles. Other infestations of which we have a record were April 1941, near Playa Del Rey; January 1944, north of Lincoln High School, Los Angeles; January 1944, Belvedere district east of Los Angeles. These would be I should judge, about three miles southwest and about six miles south respectively from the El Sereno district infestation around the Dell residence.

Eradication work was undertaken by the State Department of Agriculture and continued until 1943 at Playa Del Rey and until 1946 in the other three areas.

Most if not all of the operations are described in an article appearing in the July-September 1943 issue of the California State Department of Agriculture Bulletin under the title "Helicid Snails in California" by Earle T. Gammon. This publication is doubtless in your files.

The conclusion was finally reached that further attempts at eradication would not be justified. The several reasons as I now recall them were:

(1) At least one other infested area was found in or near San Francisco.

(2) It seemed certain that a considerable number of infestations must have been established at unknown spots because inspectors working the infested areas reported several times seeing individuals gathering snails to take home for eating purposes. We learned from some of these persons that snails had been gathered from the same spots in the past for the same purpose.

(3) Observations indicated that H.lactea did not maintain itself as well in backyard gardens as did H. aspersa. It seemed to be rather an invader from adjoining dry hill land. This does not seem consistent with snail behavior ordinarily experienced but it so happens that no infestations were ever found that did not show garden infestations contiguous to dry hill land.

(4) There seemed to be no positive evidence indicating H. lactea to be more prolific than H. aspersa.

(5) Poison material mixed by the state (3½ lbs. calcium arsenate, 50 lbs. citrus pulp, 15 lbs. bran) appeared to give effective control of both H. lactea and H.aspersa.

We are very appreciative of the information you have given us in this recent instance and many times in the past. We would particularly like to have any record of other infestations of H. lactea which may come to you as a result of your recent publicity.

Please let us know if we can be of help at any time.

Very truly yours,

HAROLD J. RYAN
Agricultural Commissioner

hjr-ct
cc C.V.Dick, Chief
Division of Plant Industry
State Dept of Agriculture,Sacramento

to Janice

NEWS RELEASE August 23, 1951

Mr. George P. Kanakoff, of the Los Angeles County Museum, who recently identified the African Milk Snail from gardens in the El Sereno and Elysian Park districts of Los Angeles, today issued this statement:

"Our discovery of the African Milk Snail in the Los Angeles area has unfortunately led some agencies to issue statements that Los Angeles is infested with the GIANT African Snail which is under quarantine by State and Federal authorities. The snail which has been found in Los Angeles gardens is Helix lactea, a hardier, and more voracious relative of the Common Garden Snail. The much feared Giant African Snail, Achatina fulica, of entirely different form, is not known to have escaped beyond the docks, owing to careful government and state watchfulness."

COPY

August 23, 1951

Better Gardens Institute of San Francisco
Room 814
114 Sansome Street
San Francisco, California

Gentlemen:

Your mimeographed release concerning the Giant African Snail has just come to my attention. I hasten to call your attention to an unfortunate misunderstanding.

The snail which we have here is Helix lactea, the African Milk Snail, and not Achatina fulica, the Giant African Snail. Helix lactea is a menace somewhat greater than the Common Garden Snail, but certainly not anything as dangerous as Achatina. The two snails are very different in appearance. Helix lactea is somewhat similar in shape to the common Helix aspersa, but with low spire, and smoother more marked striping running around its shell. Achatina is not only very much larger, but is very highly spired and has cross-striping which is not evenly defined.

We would appreciate anything you can do to correct the idea conveyed in your release that the Giant form "is on the loose" here. To our knowledge, the state and federal authorities have held it in check at the docks.

Sincerely yours,

Hildegarde Howard
Chief Curator
Division of Science

August 23, 1951

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Sincerely yours,

Hildegarde Howard
Chief Curator
Division of Science

HH:bs

August 24, 1951

Mr. Harold J. Ryan, Agricultural Commissioner
County of Los Angeles
507 Aliso Street
Los Angeles 12, California

Dear Mr. Ryan:

Following are addresses (other than those of Oakhill Drive) from which we have received specimens--or other indication of correct identification--of Helix lactea:

3917 Collis Street, L.A. 32 (in back of Oakhill Dr.) Mr. Shean
844 East Kensington Rd. (south of Sunset Blvd. at west end of Elysian Park) from Mr. Charles Des Enfants (MANY)
Barlow Sanatorium, Elysian Park (telephone communication which sounds authentic) from Mr. R. W. Brink
3109 Lincoln Park Ave., L.A. 31 (reached by steps up from North Broadway) Mr. John McCulloch sent 1 small snail
12823 Chandler Ave., North Hollywood. Miss Lois Mann sent four adult (this is the address given you by phone yesterday).

A Mr. Malcolm McKenna of 4611 Live Oak Drive, Claremont, phoned in a description which sounded authentic. Mr. Kanakoff has asked for specimens.

A note has gone to the newspapers regarding Helix lactea vs. Achatina fulica. In discussing the matter with our Public Relations office, we decided against a photo of Achatina for fear of too much emphasis. So far our papers have not confused lactea with the Giant African Snail, and we thought it better not to make too big an issue of it. I immediately wrote to the Better Gardens Institute, and a copy of my letter is enclosed.

From the addresses given above, there is a suggestion of continuous infestation; but we need more information in zones 12 and 31. We have a few phone calls yet to be followed up in those areas, but no specimens have been sent in. Addresses of those who have phoned are as follows:

2800 Sierra, L.A. 31 (Mr. D. Avila)
3009 Baldwin St., L.A. 31
1260 Court, L.A. 12
540 Casanova St., L.A. 12
1008 Mar View, L.A. 12
1518 No. Boylston, L.A. 12

Sincerely yours,

Hildegarde Howard
Chief Curator
Division of Science

HH:bs

Enc.

news release

from

LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM
EXPOSITION PARK, LOS ANGELES 7, CALIFORNIA
MORTON H. LEVINE
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE
TELEPHONE RICHMOND 2194

FOR RELEASE IMMEDIATE

GIANT AFRICAN SNAIL NOT FOUND IN LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles, August 23 -- Erroneous reports of the presence of the Giant African Snail in the Los Angeles area have been circulated following the announcement of the discovery of the African Milk Snail, Dr. Hildegarde Howard, chief Curator of Science at the Los Angeles County Museum stated today.

The African Milk Snail, Helix lactea, which is a hardier, more voracious relative of the Common Garden Snail; is not to be confused with the Giant African Snail, Achatina fulica, under quarantine by Federal and State authorities. The much feared Giant African Snail is of an entirely different form, and is not known to have entered this country beyond the docks, due to the wak watchfulness of government authorities.

-0-

news release

from

LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM
EXPOSITION PARK, LOS ANGELES 7, CALIFORNIA
MORTON H. LEVINE
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE
TELEPHONE RICHMOND 2194

FOR RELEASE IMMEDIATE

WITH SNAIL STORY: DESCRIPTION

These are the essential points of difference between the African snail, newly discovered in the area, and the European snail common to Southland gardens. It should be emphasized that both are a menace to gardens and agriculture of great economic significance, although present concentration on the African snail is aimed at preventing this invader, hardier and three times as voracious, from making a home in the area:

AFRICAN SNAIL	EUROPEAN SNAIL
1. Thick shell	1. Thin shell
2. Low ~~spire~~ SPIRE	2. Markedly High ~~Spire~~ SPIRE
3. Striping along curve of shell only, well defined stripes dark brown against creamy white background.	3. Sometimes crudely striped along curve of shell, but less distinct, with light crosswise stripes giving mottled effect.
4. Flesh around shell opening is black.	4. Flesh around shell opening is light grayish brown.
5. Shell opening oval in shape, edges thick, flat.	5. Shell opening round, with thin edge.
6. Body of snail milky gray.	6. Body is dark, muddy gray.

If specimens are checked against several or all of these points, there can be no mistake as to the identity of the snail. It is verified, according to Museum scientist George KanaRoff, that true African snails are present in East Los Angeles, Elysian Park and POSSIBLY in Laurel Canyon. Other reports are as yet unchecked.

news release

from

LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM
EXPOSITION PARK, LOS ANGELES 7, CALIFORNIA
MORTON H. LEVINE
PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE
TELEPHONE RICHMOND 2194

FOR RELEASE IMMEDIATE

WITH SNAIL STORY: HOW TO KILL SNAILS

Los Angeles, August 21 -- Los Angeles County Museum scientists, responding to hundreds of inquiries, issued instructions today on how to eradicate both the common European snail and the recently rediscovered African snail:

Two steps are required for a complete campaign to eradicate snails;

1. Use of Poisons Commercial snail bait is effective against European snails and young African snails. It is not effective against the adult African snail. For the adult African snail use Ferrous Sulphate Crystals, Chlordane dust or Chlordane spray. These poisons should be spread under bushes. Do NOT apply to the bushes themselves. Do not water the area where the poison has been spread for at least 24 hours to avoid dispersion in the soil. Ferrous sulphate and Chlordane, applied as instructed, are not dangerous to children and animals, although commercial snail baits are.

2. Physical destruction of snails Water lawn very generously toward Sunset. About two hours after sundown, come out on the lawn with a flashlight and destroy snails by stepping on them.

This two step operation, carried on simultaneously, will destroy the snails around your house within a short time, if repeated twice a week. Ask your neighbors to cooperate in doing likewise.

-0-

CAPTION

The well defined stripes of the African snail (left) are only one way to identify him. Otherwise, note the comparatively low spire and the flush spirals on the sides, compared to the high spire and projecting spirals of the common European snail (right) which is darker and more mottled in appearance. Also, the body of the African snail is milky white, while the body of the European snail is brownish gray.

-0-

GARDEN CLUB PRESIDENT ONE OF DOZENS OF CALLERS AT MUSEUM IN CONNECTION WITH SNAIL MENACE.

Mrs, Crystal Altair (right) didn't have any African snails among the specimens she brought in, although Laurel Canyon, where she is president of the Garden Club, has been spotted by County Museum Scientists George Kanakoff (left) as a possibly infested area.

SNAILS

As of 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, September 5, 1951.

535 addresses were taken by phone (at least another 300-400 phone calls were asked to send specimens, so no addresses were taken).

83
~~80~~ letters and cards received.

315
~~286~~ persons sent in snail specimens.

Better Gardens Institute
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Room 814, 114 Sansome Street XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX San Francisco, California

August 28, 1951

CHANNING JONES, JR., President
NORVELL GILLESPIE, General Manager
LOUIS F. CZUFIN, Chairman of the Board
E. C. REDEPENNING, Public Relations Counselor

Miss Hildegarde Howard
Chief Curator
Division of Science
Los Angeles County Museum
Exposition Park
Los Angeles 7, California

Dear Miss Howard:

Thanks very much for your recent letter giving me the real dope on this present African snail scare. Please note the attached story which we sent out Monday, August 27 to the various columnists on our list so that they can be set straight.

You can imagine what a relief it is to us to know that the real Giant African snail is not on the loose. Believe me, I have seen them in action in the Hawaiian Islands and our gardens would really take a beating if they ever got loose.

Very truly yours,

Norvell Gillespie

Norvell Gillespie

mv

(Editor's Note: While Norvell Gillespie and Channing Jones are in the Hawaiian Islands completing a brand new movie on "How to Grow Orchids", and gathering news notes for future columns, noted Western growers will serve as guest writers. Today's guest is Mr. Fred McNabb, radio commentator, seedsman and bulbsman with more than 30 years practical experience.)

8/27/51

ORCHID IRISES ARE BEAUTIFUL

What are "bulbous"irises? Are they worth growing? Are they truly useful and beautiful? The answer is a resounding "yes"!

They're easy to grow, give pleasing color effect and multiply fast in most gardens. Furthermore, they are not expensive. Get started during September and October with a few plantings.

The iris blooming season opens with the lovely Dutch varieties and continues with the Spanish kinds and finally the English irises. All are bulbous types. Equally beautiful in form and richness of coloring, these irises make an exquisite garden picture.

Bulbous or orchid irises bloom from mid-March to mid-June, depending on the type. They grow from 18 inches to 24 inches tall and bear well above their graceful, rushlike foliage flowers which excel in delicacy and brilliance.

As cut flowers bulbous irises are surpassed by none. It is worthwhile growing a batch for this purpose alone.

You get the loveliest effect with these irises when you devote a border exclusively to them, and arrange it in harmonizing color panels of artistic shape. If you have a group of three or four small lawn beds, these provide a glorious setting, and the picture will be superb if you plant one color in each bed.

Should either method be inconvenient you can glorify the front of the mixed border by planting one color colonies of six to twelve bulbs in vacant places.

Or, perhaps you have on the lawn a shrub bed with a vacant strip around the margin, or if it is an azalea bed, there may be spaces between the specimens. Bulbous irises give a perfect finish to beds such as these.

Remember, though, that good drainage, and sunshine --- or at the most, partial shade --- are essential.

When preparing for planting dig a foot deep, stirring the subsoil if this is hard and "panny". The roots won't go below the one foot level, but it is necessary that surplus water should have a free, downward course. With each square yard incorporate thoroughly half a pailful of an equal part mixture of well-rotted manure and leaf mold and two ounces of bonemeal.

After breaking up the soil finely and raking it even, you are ready for planting.

The distance apart for Spanish irises is four inches. Allow the more vigorous English and Dutch six inches. Cover the crown or top of each bulb with three inches of soil.

Plant with a trowel, making each hole large enough to enable you to place the bulb right at the bottom.

Place beneath each bulb a quarter-inch layer of sand to preserve hygienic conditions in the neighborhood of the roots.

When planting in rows, set the bulbs alternately, and endeavor to place them alternately as far as possible, when arranging circles, so that every flower may show to the best advantage.

After filling in the holes, rake the surface even. There must be no pot holes in which water can collect and make soggy patches.

During autumn and winter no attention is necessary beyond stirring the surface soil whenever it shows signs of caking, and firming it after frost. However severe the weather may be, no section needs mulching save the Dutch, which are not only more forward, but also a little tenderer in the early stages.

The first sheets will appear from the middle of January to the end of February, according to the section, distfict, and mildness or otherwise of the winter. About the first of March, apply a feeding of 10-5-5 liquid fish fertilizer.

# # # # #

GIANT AFRICAN SNAILS
NOT HERE - AFTER ALL

There is enough snail and slug damage in Western gardens without new villians creeping into the garden. During the past two weeks in Los Angeles there has been a real scare in the metropolitan area because of the "discovery" of the Giant African snails. This is the big fellow, which commonly reaches 9 inches in length and which served as food for Japanese soldiers during World War II. But, according to Howard Wilcomb, a member of the Agricultural Commissioners staff of Los Angeles, it is not true that the big granddaddy snails is on the loose. That is good news, for the giant could cause millions of dollars worth of damage. According to

Wilcomb. "The principal confusion has been that the snail Helix lactea, or the milk snail, has at times been called the African snail, which is unfortunate, as what happened in this instance was its confusion with the Giant African snail, Achatina fulica.

The Giant African snail does not exist in the United States, although it has been taken on port quarantine inspections from military equipment coming from the South sea islands. The milk snail was first found in Los Angeles County in 1940 in Elysian Park and although the County Museum has had specimens for many years someone there seemd to think it was new and doing a great deal of damage. On the contrary, this snail is not thought at present to be as damaging as the common brown snail, Helix aspersa, inasmuch as it is rather dormant in the summer and feeds mainly on hillside types of weeds and grasses rather than yard plants.

Rather than the 100 men that local newspapers in Los Angeles stated were used to eliminate them, there were 4 men at various periods putting out bait in an attempt to eradicate them up to 1946. At that time it was decided that the snail was not of enough importance to continue eradication attempts.

The milk snail is easily identified by the black foot or the inside base of the snail while the common brown is cream or gray colored inside the shell. Almost all of the specimens that have been brought in as a result of the newspaper items have been the brown snail. These two, as you undoubtedly know, are about the same size while the Giant African snail is quite large."

Of course this is no reason to let down on the snail and slug fight. The "common" European snails cause plenty of damage. Scatter plenty of metaldehyde bug pellets to lure them to a swift death.

# # # # #

County of Los Angeles

HAROLD J. RYAN
COMMISSIONER
KENNETH L. WOLFF
CHIEF DEPUTY

Agricultural Commissioner
507 ALISO STREET
Los Angeles 12, California

PHONE MUTUAL 9211

October 18, 1951

Dr.Hildegarde Howard
Chief Curator, Division of Science
Los Angeles County Museum
Exposition Park
Los Angeles 7, California

Dear Dr. Howard:

The list in your letter of August 24th of locations from which you received specimens of Otala (helix) lactea is much appreciated.

With one exception, these are all within the general area of previously recorded findings.

The infestation outside of the old area is the one in North Hollywood on property belonging to Mrs.J.Mann at 12823 Chandler Avenue. Here as you know, the infestation was found in a bed of Mesembryanthemum. Mrs.Mann was able only to inform Mr.L.E.Myers of our office when he visited the property, that she had collected the original Mesembryanthemum plants from along Ventura Boulevard somewhere near the Ventura County line about 1942. She is unable to identify the exact spot from which they were collected. Shortly after she planted the bed of Mesembryanthemum she noticed the snails.

We will make additional inspections of this property and contiguous pieces when the snails become more active, with the idea of considering some cleanup work if it appears to be a small infestation. We will also do some scouting in the vicinity of Calabasas along Ventura Boulevard in the hopes of learning whether there is an existing infestation out there.

Our district inspector Mr.Oberle interviewed Mr.Malcolm McKenna of Claremont, who telephoned you a description of lactea. Mr.Oberle reports that Mr.McKenna had recently been a patient at the Barlow Sanitarium in Chavez Ravine, Elysian Park and that he stated that it was there that he found the specimens which he described to you over the telephone. Chavez Ravine of course, is the infested area found about 1940.

I would be much interested to know of any specimens of this snail or apparently authentic reports from any points outside of the Sunset Boulevard, Chavez Ravine, Lincoln High School, El Sereno, City Terrace, Crescent section.

I will make it a point to advise you of any new information that comes to us and of what we find further in North Hollywood or near Calabasas.

Sincerely yours,

HAROLD J. RYAN
Agricultural Commissioner

hjr-ct

September 17, 1951

Mr. C. A. Swigart
11338 Lower Azusa
El Monte, California

Dear Mr. Swigart:

The small snail you sent us is not an African form, but a type native to California. The curator, Mr. Kanakoff, will probably write you regarding it when he returns from his vacation in about two weeks.

Thank you for sending us the snail.

Yours truly,

Barbara Schultze
Secretary
Division of Science